

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6640

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, January 31, 2008

Title: An act relating to professional development for instructional assistants.

Brief Description: Providing opportunities for professional development for instructional assistants.

Sponsors: Senators Rasmussen, King, Sheldon, McAuliffe, Rockefeller, Holmquist, Kauffman, Schoesler and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/30/08, 1/31/08 [DP-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Tom, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Holmquist, McDermott, Oemig and Rasmussen.

Staff: Roman Dixon (786-7438)

Background: In the 1999-2001 biennium, the Legislature consolidated professional development funds from a variety of sources and provided funding specifically for Summer Accountability Institutes (Summer Institutes) to be organized by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). The Summer Institutes are intended to provide school district staff with training in assessment, data analysis, successful teaching models, research on curriculum and instruction, and planning tools to improve instruction.

In recent years, the Summer Institutes have become five-day conferences held at three locations across the state with attendance of 800 to 1,000 teachers and staff at each conference. There is also a three-day January conference, usually in Spokane. Each conference has strands of presentations focused on a particular theme or target audience. For example, the OSPI was directed to focus at least one institute in 2008 and 2009 specifically on mathematics' instruction.

Summary of Bill: The OSPI, in consultation with the Public School Employees of Washington and other groups representing school district classified employees, must develop and offer a training strand through the summer institutes and the winter conference targeted to classified instructional assistants and designed to help them maximize their effectiveness in improving student achievement.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 25, 2008.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Instructional assistants need training to keep up with changes in curriculum and technology just like other professionals. Paraeducators are integral to the training and support of our children. Student achievement depends on rigorous standards and a knowledgeable education team. In order to have high standards for students, it is also necessary to have high standards for the staff who work with them. This bill demonstrates commitment to the success of all students through the identification, provision, and support of high quality professional development for paraeducators.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Rasmussen, prime sponsor; Lucinda Young, Washington Educators Association; Marijean Woodward, Public School Employees of Washington/Tahoma School District; Tom Lopp, Public School Employees of Washington.